

ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Mohammed Ilyas (Chairman), Michael Airey (Vice-Chairman), Judith Diment and Charles Hollingsworth

Officers: Andy Carswell, Alison Alexander, Angela Morris and Lynne Lidster

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Ilyas nominated himself for the position of Chairman. The motion was seconded by Cllr Diment and unanimously approved by Members. Cllr Ilyas was elected as Chairman of the Panel for the 2017/18 municipal year.

Cllr Airey nominated himself for the position of Vice Chairman. The motion was seconded by Cllr Diment and unanimously approved by Members. Cllr Airey was elected as Vice Chairman of the Panel for the 2017/18 municipal year.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lenton and Hilary Hall.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

The Part I minutes of the meeting held on May 17th 2017 were unanimously agreed as an accurate record.

ANNUAL COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care introduced the item by explaining the report covered all complaints received in 2016/17 under the statutory complaints procedures for adults and children's care, as well as the formal procedure for corporate complaints. She informed Members that complaints were taken very seriously by the Council, and the policy enabled staff the opportunity to receive feedback from customers and learn lessons as a result.

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care outlined the large number of interactions that adult social care staff had with customers to contextualise the complaints that were received. Members were informed that there were around 1,700 adults in the Royal Borough receiving long term care and support and 1,800 concerns and enquiries about safeguarding were received. There were 484 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding assessments carried out.

Members were informed that the complaints procedure had changed during the course of the time period referred to in the report, and the complaints process now consisted of only one stage. Members were informed that the Council aimed to resolve complaints within ten days, and the Complaints Team would liaise with a complainant if there were delays to their case. It was also explained that a complainant could escalate their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman for further investigation. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that a total of 12 complaints were investigated by the LGO, and that two of

them related to adult and social care services. Of those, one was upheld and the other was not.

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that the Council received a total of 802 complaints in 2016/17. Of these, 42 related to adult and social care; around five per cent of the overall total. Members were informed this represented a reduction from 44 from the previous year. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that 20 complaints related to the largest team, which handled interactions with older people and those with physical disabilities, and four related to finance. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that these two teams had the largest number of interactions with customers. Of the 42 complaints relating to adult and social care, seven related to the attitude/behaviour of staff. Members were informed that 60 per cent of complaints were made by the service user.

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that 71 per cent of complainants who made a complaint relating to adult and social care received a response within the agreed target timeframe of ten days, compared to 62 per cent the previous year. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said those falling outside the timeframe often involved complex issues that required further investigation.

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said that focus groups had been held on certain topic areas as a way of learning lessons and making improvements. A need to improve communication between staff and customers had been identified. Staff had also received additional training regarding data protection regulations, particularly in relation to younger people.

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that 35 compliments on staff performance had been received, which was a reduction compared to the previous year. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated her belief that more compliments had been made, but some of these may have been verbal and not subsequently recorded. Members were informed that it was felt there was a general underreporting of compliments.

Cllr Hollingsworth asked about the system of informing customers of the progress of their case at appropriate times. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said there was a tracker system which is monitored and reviewed each week at Team Manager Level; if a case had gone past the ten day timeframe, the Team Manager would raise the matter with the relevant member of staff. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care also stated that it was accepted that identifying appropriate times when a customer could be contacted and provided with an update on their case was a priority.

Cllr Diment said the report was very useful and that she was pleased to see the number of compliments that officers had received. She said that the process for submitting compliments should be publicised more widely amongst members of the public. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said she would feed that back to the report author.

The Vice Chairman asked if it was felt some customers had unrealistic expectations of the services they were using. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that in certain cases customers thought that adult social care could deliver more than it does. It was felt that the best way of informing customers about the services that were provided was to meet with the customer and explain what had been agreed about their care programme and what could be delivered. Additional training had been given to frontline staff to aid this process.

Cllr Diment asked how the Council compared to other Local Authorities with regards to complaints. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said it would be possible to do a comparison as it was a legal requirement for all councils to produce a report on

complaints. It was agreed that a comparison report with other councils in Berkshire would be produced for a future meeting.

The Chairman asked if the number of complaints received was due to the systems enabling customers to make a complaint being improved. He also asked if it would be possible to make it easier for a compliment to be made at the point of contact with the member of Council staff. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care admitted that the Council needed to be more proactive in this respect, and that work was taking place to make it easier for compliments to be submitted.

Cllr Hollingsworth asked if processes were in place to inform customers about what other services were available if the Council was not in a position to help. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care explained that social prescribers attached to GP surgeries had recently been employed in the area, who would be able to liaise with care groups and find a solution for customers. Members were reminded that the Council also worked closely with the CCG and the volunteer sector to provide solutions.

Cllr Hollingsworth asked if customers would be assigned a social worker from the start of their interaction with the Council. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care confirmed that this was the case after a recent change in policy.

It was confirmed that the Council only had to provide reports on complaints received in relation to children's and adults services, but the report went further than this as a matter of good practice.

UPDATE ON TRANSFER OF ADULT SERVICES TO OPTALIS

The Head of Commissioning – Adults and Children, Strategy and Commissioning introduced the item and explained the governance and management of adult services as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report. Members were informed that the Optalis Shareholding Board makes decisions on Reserved Matters and is comprised of six directors, three from the Royal Borough and three from Wokingham Borough Council. Members were informed that the Joint Commissioning Board was responsible for reviewing contracts and commissioning work at Optalis, the Operational Commissioning Group was responsible for managing performance, and the Executive Board took responsibility for governance of the company's activities. The Adult Services and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel at the Royal Borough retained the ability to scrutinise the contract between Optalis and the Council, and to scrutinise the performance.

The Head of Commissioning – Adults and Children, Strategy and Commissioning informed Members that the update report measured progress from March to the end of August. Members were informed that there had been a notable improvement in performance regarding delayed transfer of patients from hospital care, and in relation to applications for Deprivation of Liberty Standards. However it had been acknowledged that there were areas that required improvement, including timeliness of reviews for people and their carers receiving ongoing services, and reviewing of Independence Plans provided by the Council's care provider, Carewatch. Members were informed that these two areas were not meeting their targets. The Head of Commissioning – Adults and Children, Strategy and Commissioning informed Members that in order to meet satisfactory standards with regards to safeguarding, Optalis were in the process of recruiting additional staff and the company was confident targets would be met by March 2018 as a result. Members were informed that Finance was performing well and there had been an overall underspend in adult social care, due mainly to a number of one-off windfall payments.

The Vice Chairman asked for clarification on the performance indicator relating to the percentage of Deprivation of Liberty Standards applications not dealt with within 12 months. The Head of Commissioning – Adults and Children, Strategy and Commissioning explained that performance was currently much better than targeted. The process for carrying out a

Deprivation of Liberty Standards assessment, and which customers they relate to, was explained to Members.

The Vice Chairman asked if there were any issues pre-transfer which were affecting the most recent figures. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said there was a stretched target in terms of reviews and carers' reviews. Members were informed that in order to meet the new stretched target permission had been given to recruit four new members of staff. Three of the vacancies had been filled but the Council was still seeking to recruit a fourth member of staff who would take responsibility for working with adults with autism.

The Vice Chairman asked for more information on Independence Plans, as this was an area where targets were not being met. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that Independence Plans were completed by the home care provider and sent to the Social Work team so the needs of the resident could be met. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that the Independence Plans had not always been reviewed and kept up to date; however over the last two months reviews had been taking place more regularly. Members were informed the reviews would be sent in the Social Work team for sign-off from the domiciliary workers. It was explained that the review process would highlight whether the service provided value for money.

Cllr Hollingsworth asked if there were more people with autism living in the Royal Borough compared to other Local Authority areas. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that a report compiled around a year and a half ago confirmed there was a higher than average incidence of autism in the Royal Borough. Cllr Hollingsworth asked if there was any evidence to suggest levels of autism was related to people marrying their cousins. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care said she was not aware of this as being an issue but would look into it and report back at a future meeting.

Responding to a question from the Chairman, the Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care gave further clarification on the Deprivation of Liberty Standards assessment process and how it applied to people with mental health issues, particularly dementia. Responding to a question from Cllr Diment, the Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that some cases relating to Deprivation of Liberty Standards would be referred to the Court of Protection and it would be for the Council to justify that the patient was receiving the correct care. However the majority of people would remain in the safe environment that had been allocated to them as part of the assessment.

UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF BUSINESS PLAN

The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care explained that the Business Plan had been developed in order for targets and performance objectives to be set, and to reflect the work being carried out in the Royal Borough and in Wokingham.

The Chairman asked for examples of challenges that staff had faced with regards to the delivery of the Business Plan. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that a system that ensuring a service user would be referred to the same member of staff each time they contacted the team was being implemented, and was proving a useful motivator for staff. She explained that having a member of staff assigned to a case reduced the time filling out assessments, and many callers wanted a quick intervention. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that Delivering and Transforming Care Pathways, where staff worked with people with a learning difficulty who needed a health intervention, had also been challenging for staff. Members were informed that attracting staff had been a challenge, as social workers would traditionally apply for roles at a council rather than an outside body.

The Chairman asked the Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care if an example of a success could be shared with Members. She stated that the Transforming Care Pathways scheme had managed to secure places in the local area for three residents with profound learning difficulties. Members were informed that ordinarily people with this level of need

would be placed into care in specialist centres, often long distances from the Royal Borough; however this example, where Optalis staff had worked with the NHS, meant residents were able to stay in suitable care near their families.

Cllr Hollingsworth asked if staff were provided with additional support and/or funding in order to earn further qualifications. The Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated that a talent programme identifying members of staff with potential but little formal education had been implemented, as a means of recognising the values and attitude of staff members. She stated that as a result of this project a staff member had felt the confidence to apply for a management post within the organisation. Members were informed that two new social workers may soon be recruited as a result of an Open University education.

Responding to a question from Cllr Hollingsworth, the Deputy Director of Health and Adult Social Care stated she believed the relationship between the Council and NHS had improved and was positive.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: "That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on item 9 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act."

The meeting, which began at 7.30 pm, finished at 8.24 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....